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Such consciousness of strength, we may reasonably suppose, however, they did not possess, and it was, therefore, doubtless, a much safer course to set at defiance the judgment of that higher and nobler class of minds, which dares to use, like freemen, the intellect which God has bestowed upon them, and to rest satisfied with the blind allegiance of those who are ignobly willing to *take for granted* whatever is told them, or contented to confine their thoughts and inquiries within the limited channels which an assumed authority has thought proper to prescribe to them, by reading only on one side of such questions as their priestly masters may think proper to direct, whether because they consider such topics dangerous to their authority or interest, or from any other motive.

Whatever conclusions, however, our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen may draw from the course of policy pursued by their priesthood with respect to controversy in general in Ireland, *our* line of duty appears to be clear, and we shall pursue it, with God's blessing, steadily and perseveringly.

We shall continue to lay before our readers the best materials for thought and the best arguments we can procure upon either side of the momentous questions in difference; and should any better arguments exist upon the side of Roman Catholics than those with which we are acquainted, the crime of keeping them back will rest with those (whether lay or clerical) who have it in their power to produce them and decline to do so, and not with us, who are at all times ready to give to the world anything written in a spirit of candour and with ordinary knowledge of the subject, which may be supplied to us for that purpose.

We would add but one word more, to those kind and liberal friends who are anxious to facilitate and extend the circulation of our pages in Ireland and elsewhere, and it is this: In selecting persons to whom it is proposed to send the *CATHOLIC LAYMAN* gratuitously during the ensuing year, through motives of benevolence, let not our friends wholly overlook the *humbler classes of intelligent Protestants*, many of whom would gladly obtain access to such a periodical if their scanty means enabled them to do so, and would, therefore, gratefully receive, and lend it to others, if enabled to do so by the liberality of their wealthier brethren.

We sincerely believe that there is a large class of Protestants who require some such assistance quite as much as many Roman Catholics; and if it was in our power, we should gladly supply our periodical gratuitously to every intelligent Protestant in Ireland who was anxious to receive it and too poor to purchase it for himself, and we shall be most happy to carry out such a means of extending the circulation of our pages—to the full extent of any funds which may be contributed to us specifically for that purpose.

With that view, we invite such Protestants as may be desirous to be furnished gratuitously with the *CATHOLIC LAYMAN*, during the ensuing year, to furnish us without delay with such application, which we shall *gladly* comply with, to the full extent that funds may be supplied to us to cover the mere expense of the *additional paper and stamps* required for that purpose.

There is an article in this month's *Rambler*, addressed exclusively to (Roman) Catholics, the object of which is to point out the real superiority of their actual condition as Englishmen, when compared with that of Catholics in other countries in Europe, and which contains many such true statements and admissions, with respect to the real state of things in France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and other countries where the (Roman)

Catholic religion is that associated with and protected by the secular power, that we think we shall do good service by making some of them more widely known among the Roman Catholics of Ireland, than they are probably likely to be through the pages of the *Rambler* itself:—

"Few things," says the writer (p. 421), "are more hurtful and paralyzing, as there is nothing more untrue, than the notion that in 'Catholic countries' everything goes on with a sort of millennial faultlessness; that all sovereigns are pious, all bishops wise, learned, immaculate, paternal, and admirable men of business; all nuns up to the ideal standard of the cloister; all monks models of asceticism; all priests first-rate preachers and spiritual directors; church ceremonies very numerous and splendidly conducted; church music exquisite and appropriate; and all schools for the poor in admirable order: in short, that nothing is easier than to go to heaven without the smallest hindrance, if only a man has the will for it!"

"Never let it be supposed that where Catholicism is dominant, the land is always free from those special grievances which particularly affect us as English and Irish Catholics. . . . It is a grievous error to suppose that these evils are confined to Protestant England. Many of them exist in Catholic countries, and even in quarters which would amaze the devout Catholic who has been hugging himself in the conviction that wherever Catholic persons have the means of doing right, they have also the will to do it. In the name of all that is sacred, let us not rest till every abuse of this kind is rooted out of the land; but in the name of all prudence, let us not hinder our own success by attributing the scandals we deplore to the circumstance that we are living among Protestant Englishmen, and asserting that Catholic continental countries are invariably models for our imitation. If any man wishes to know what a gaol or a regiment may become under a Catholic government, not in the way of mere abuse of a good method, but in precisely the way that our poor and our criminals suffer at home, let him get at the opinions of his present Holiness, Pius IX., and ascertain the means which even he has been compelled to resort to in order to remedy the evils. These things do not often get into newspapers, it is true; but still those who know what is behind the curtain are well aware that Catholic countries are *never* in a state of millennial perfection; and that to attack the abuses in England, as if they were exclusively confined to Protestantism, is not only a rhetorical blunder, but a logical mis-statement."—p. 426.

There is a manliness and candour in the foregoing passages, very unlike the exaggerated prejudice against all things Protestant which too often characterizes Roman Catholic periodicals at this side of the channel; and although we, of course, do not admit that Roman Catholics are at the present day subjected to anything like persecution, there is much in the following paragraphs well deserving of the consideration of every British subject, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, who values the sacred birthright of political and religious freedom:—

"Again, granting that the attacks of Protestantism and the social persecution to which we are subjected do produce some serious evils, and are a positive hindrance to the well-being of Catholicism and the spiritual progress of individual Catholics—which we do not for a moment deny—it is clear as the day that the continental system does not practically succeed in such a manner as to make us wish for its adoption. Look at Italy, for instance, at this moment. How could the Church hold her own in that country by mere force of moral and intellectual strength? Was there ever a Pontiff whose personal character was more calculated to disarm the ferocity of the enemies of the faith than the present Pope? Yet the exclusive system has so utterly failed in retaining the allegiance of the middle and upper classes of Italy, taken as a body, and of many of the lower classes also, that no one would be surprised to see a storm of ignorant brutal fury burst upon the rulers and priesthood of the Church, even more savage and wicked than that which constituted what they call the 'Reformation' of the sixteenth century. . . . It is the same everywhere. France, under the restrictive system of Louis XIV., gave birth to its first revolution; Spain, under the same, brought up its nobles and people to defy the Pope, plunder the Church, and banish the religious orders; in Portugal, history has the same story to tell: in fact, everywhere we have seen proofs that the Church is better off with its disloyal children outside its doors than inside them, and that open enmity is less deadly than false friendship."—p. 428.

To those who know the actual state of the law, as settled in 1829, by what is called the "*Emancipation Act*" (10 Geo. IV., c. 7), the force of the next extract, which we are about to give, will be thoroughly understood; but to enable others fully to appreciate it, we may remind

them that that great measure for the relief of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects contained clauses, recognizing the expediency of gradually suppressing, and finally prohibiting Jesuits, and members of other religious orders, from being resident within the United Kingdom, and, therefore, not only subjected any such person coming into the realm after 23rd April, 1829, to banishment for life, but made it a misdemeanour within any part of the United Kingdom after the said date to admit any person to become a member of such religious orders, and subjected the person so admitted to be a Jesuit, or member of any other such religious order, to banishment for his life. Hear now the writer in the *Rambler* as to the mode in which these stringent provisions have been acted on in practice, and then say whether the Jesuits have any right to complain of "social persecution" in England:—

Again, in p. 425.—"With the exception of the Papal States and Belgium, we do not believe there is one of the European states in which, *on the whole*, the religious orders are as free to do as they like as they are in England. Does any man who knows the Continental system suppose that anywhere but in England the Jesuits would have ventured to place themselves literally next door to the Sovereign's own house, without first asking leave? Granting all the harm that is done by popular prejudice against priests, monks, and friars, who would exchange this freedom for all the 'favours' of the most 'Catholic' monarch in the world? Look at these two facts, we say, and form your judgment: in heretical England the Jesuits buy a fine estate, actually joining on to the Queen's Park at Windsor, and nobody interferes with them; in Catholic Naples the Jesuits issue a magazine very like this *Rambler* of ours, and in it they venture to hint that kings are not exactly divinely-appointed lords of men's souls and bodies, and down comes the minister of police, and forces them, under penalty of instant contumelious (query contumelious?) exile, to sign a paper which throws the whole society of Jesus into dismay, and is formally disowned in the public newspapers of Europe by the General himself. Surely, it is better to be abused and insulted, and yet left practically to go our own ways, than to be 'protected' from the abuse of heresy by a secular power, which reserves for itself a rigid practical control over all our actions."

The hollowness and insincerity of religious belief, and mutual want of confidence, which prevail in such countries as Italy, Spain, and Portugal are well expressed in the next passage, which gives us, besides, some little insight into the disclosures which might be made of the internal state of the Roman Catholic Church in England, if Protestants "had not so great a confidence in the efficacy of publicity for the detection of abuses that they are confident, when abuses are not known, they do not exist," instead of acting on the "habitual suspiciousness engendered by the opposite and despotic method."

"A little thought, indeed, shows us how this comes to pass, and brings to light the real advantages of freedom of speech. Abroad, where the hushing up and restrictive system prevails, everybody is suspicious of everybody, and especially of the clergy. The multitudes of men and women who are nominally Catholics, but in their hearts semi-Protestant, are far more ready to believe insinuations against the characters of ecclesiastics and of people in office than are the *bona fide* Protestants of this country."

"It is a most singular fact that, with all its appetite for anti-Catholic news, the British public hardly ever get hold of those passing events and habitual faults which really reflect discredit upon us as Catholics, and upon our cause. Judging *à priori*, one would have supposed that every little *faux pas* that we committed would be inevitably held up to the light of day, and made the text of a thousand bitter and crushing invectives against us. . . . But no; so different is the working of this free system from what might have been looked for, that when by chance a priest or layman goes wrong, and is an actual scandal to his fellow-Catholics, the Protestant world hardly ever find it out, unless the unhappy person forces himself on their attention, and constitutes himself an apostle of heresy. Observe, too, the general defect of our internal system in this country, and the infirmities with which we may sometimes be fairly chargeable: evidently, Protestants know hardly anything about them. We live in the midst of a people who more or less dislike us, are jealous of us, and suspicious to the last degree; we have ill-conditioned, and disloyal members in our own community, both able and willing to show us up in anything but heroic postures; yet, strangely, nothing comes of it. Our peccadilloes remain the subjects of the private lamentations of Catholic society, even when those lamentations extend through

our whole body; and Protestantism remains as much in the dark as to our defects as it is to our virtues."—p. 427.

"Once more, if the strong arm of 'order' and surveillance silences the outbreaks of foreign anti-Catholicism, it does not prevent divisions and quarrels among Catholics themselves, sometimes of a very disastrous tendency, but which are without any parallel amongst ourselves. We have our little difficulties, it is true; our heart-burnings, our newspaper and conversational squabbles; our disagreements about Gothicism, plain-chant, politics, and other such topics; but these are nothing to the deep seated wounds produced by such contests as occasionally shake the foundations of clerical and lay Catholic society abroad. What have we ever had here at all like the affair of Gioberti and the Jesuits in Italy; or like the discussions of which the soil of France is so rife, where even the warfare of two periodicals is of so serious a nature that the highest dignitaries of the Church become involved in it? And are we wrong in attributing this tendency of our English Catholic disputes to die away peaceably to the circumstance that we live in a land where discussion is the order of the day; where everybody says what he likes, and there is such a surfeit of plain speaking, that a really furious contest cannot be got up among Catholics, for the simple reason that people will not have their ears stunned by the disputants, who, accordingly, subside into silence for the want of backing? Whereas, if we were held in by a restrictive system, whether political or theological, which forbade us to read, write, or say just what we chose, the result would be, that whenever we *could* quarrel we would do it with a vengeance, and make up for our want of liberty in things in general by an outrageous licence in things in particular."—p. 430-1.

Cordially agreeing in nearly all the above well expressed remarks, we still venture to ask whether the Roman Catholic authorities are not doing their best at the present moment to introduce a restrictive theological system, which *does forbid men to read, write, or say what they please*, and doing all in their power to prevent free "discussion" being any longer "the order of the day" in those momentous matters which concern the well-being of mankind more deeply than any other, both in this world and in the next?

The writer in the *Rambler* concludes his able article with an exhortation to his Roman Catholic readers, "from the peer down to the mechanic, to show themselves among their fellow countrymen."

"We submit to the younger members of our old families, to the cultivated and sincere members of the learned professions, and to every man who has brains, energy, and a tolerable education, that this is not the time for us to slink into corners" (as the Roman Catholic priests do in matters of controversy in Ireland) "like naughty boys, or to lie down on the ground, and let bigoted ride rough-shod over our heads" (of course, meaning as it has done in the case of the Jesuits at Windsor). "We must make ourselves felt and recognized as an existing part of the nation; and this can only be done by sharing in its life, fulfilling our portion of its duties, and contributing to its instruction and enjoyment." (What would the *Rambler* say to beginning by taking up the often repeated challenge of the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, and contribute to the instruction of the rest of the nation, of which it desires to be felt and recognized as an existing part, by disproving some leading parts, at least, of what we have been attempting to prove in our pages?) "The result will be not only a diminution of the difficulties which beset those who are disposed to become Catholics, and an enlightening of the minds of thousands as to our real creed" (objects, doubtless, of legitimate and intense interest to the conductors of the *Rambler*), "but it will be a better protection to our clergy, to our nuns, and to our poor, than all the assaults we can make upon the doctrines of Protestantism, and all the satires with which we can show up the inconsistencies of its adherents"—p. 433-4.

We cordially agree here with the able writer, and sincerely trust that he will begin the new year by earnestly setting about the task of "enlightening the minds of Protestants as to his real creed, and removing out of the way the difficulties which beset those who are disposed to become (Roman) Catholics," as we ourselves may possibly become, if he or his colleagues will only take the trouble of "showing themselves" to their fellow-countrymen, and not any longer "slink into corners like naughty boys," or lie down on the ground and let the conductors of such a (bigoted?) periodical as the CATHOLIC LAYMAN "ride rough-shod over their heads," for want of opposition, to the great mortification

of that part of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland which still takes the liberty of "reading, writing, and saying just what they choose," in spite of *would-be* ecclesiastical rulers, and their "Continental" restrictions.

We have received letters from two different correspondents, both written under the misapprehension that we *advocated* prayers for the dead in our last number.

Now, we did no such thing. We were answering a Roman Catholic correspondent, who alleged, in proof that St. Augustine believed in Purgatory, the fact that he prayed for his mother, Monica, after her death. We fully admitted that he did so pray; and we admitted, also, that similar prayers had been used in the Church from a very early period of her history—so early, indeed, as the second century.

In reply to any one who finds fault with us for making such admissions, we think it quite defence enough to say that the things we stated are true. We should consider ourselves quite unworthy of the confidence our readers repose in us if, when professing to discuss the opinions of the Fathers, we were to bring forward a carefully-selected list of the passages that tell in our favour, keeping in the background those that seem to tell against us. Our aim has always been to report fairly what we read, whatever may seem to be the consequences, and we feel very little temptation to be dishonest in this matter, as we do not consider ourselves in any way bound to adopt every opinion that has ever been held by any of the Fathers. But, were our temptations ten times as great as they are, we hope that we should be able to resist them, and to act up to our principles, by candidly placing before our readers the full state of the facts, as far as they are known to ourselves.

We also stated, in our last number, that there is not the least reason to think that the early Fathers who speak of prayers for the dead believed in Purgatory. We consider that we gave ample proofs for our assertion, viz.:—the fact that they never once speak of the departed saints as suffering pain after their removal from this world; that they give quite different reasons for their prayers; that they pray for the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles, whom they could never have supposed to be in Purgatory; and that the existence of Purgatory was a matter of doubtful speculation in the time of Augustine, notwithstanding the existence of prayers for the dead for two centuries before. All this proves beyond doubt that, whatever difficulty people now may have in conceiving prayers for the dead without a belief in Purgatory, still it is a matter of fact that such prayers were used for full two hundred years before the doctrine of Purgatory was established. The truth is, it was not the belief in Purgatory which gave rise to prayers for the dead, but it was the practice of prayers for the dead out of which the doctrine of Purgatory was developed. We think we can add that this is not our private opinion, but that of all candid and learned inquirers into the opinions of the Fathers, Roman Catholic or Protestant.

But our correspondents are mistaken if they suppose that, in stating honestly the results of our inquiries respecting the practice of the ancient Church, we meant to express any dissent from the course which the Church of England has adopted with regard to prayers for the dead. On the contrary, we believe she has used a very wise discretion in the course she has adopted.

In the first place, Roman Catholics must allow that the Church of the present day is at full liberty to depart from the practice of the Ancient Church, if she sees good reason to do so. The Church of Rome has abandoned many practices confessedly used by the Primitive Church: for instance, Love Feasts, the Kiss of Peace, the

Order of Deaconesses, and—most important of all—Communion in both kinds, which all Roman Catholic divines allow to have been the ordinary custom of the Ancient Church.

Now, since there is no Scripture precept for prayers for the dead, nor any example of such prayers in the Bible; since we have no information in what way such prayers are likely to benefit those in whose behalf they are offered; since these prayers have come to be mixed up with a false and superstitious belief; since most of such prayers *now* offered are founded on the belief in Purgatory; and since the use of such prayers would be likely to strengthen that belief: for all these reasons, we think the Church of England is amply justified in altering or omitting from her service book those prayers for the dead confessedly to be found in the ancient liturgies.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER.

A DIALOGUE.

[In order to enable the reader to understand the following dialogue, it is sufficient to explain that the speakers are Frank MacManus (who had been originally brought up as a Roman Catholic, and had become a Protestant under circumstances which may possibly be known to some of our readers) and his favourite sister Mary, who still continued warmly attached to her old religion. Frank's change of religion had produced for some time an estrangement between him and his family, and it was first in the house of a friend, who had purposely contrived the meeting, that he and his sister were, after the lapse of some time, rather unexpectedly brought together. We pass over that part of their conversation which referred only to their family concerns, and copy some of that portion in which their religious differences were discussed.]

Mary. I hope, dearest Frank, you feel that, notwithstanding the time that has passed since we have seen each other, and though I have obeyed my father's orders in not writing to you—I hope you feel sure that you have not been forgotten. I assure you, not a day has passed since that you have been out of my mind. I cannot tell you how I pitied you for all that you have suffered, and I know so well the causes that have brought a temporary blindness on your mind, that I feel certain that, after a time, you cannot fail to return to the old faith. I am sure, Frank, that my prayers will not be unanswered. Every day I have implored the Blessed Virgin to interest herself on your behalf; and our dear mother, who is now a saint in heaven, joins with me, I know, in my supplications, and I am sure our prayers will not be in vain.

Frank. I did feel sure, dearest Mary, that you had not forgotten me. And I can myself completely echo all you say. Not for a day have you and the other dear ones at Ballymanus been forgotten by me; and especially at the Throne of Grace, you have been on my mind, and I constantly implore our Blessed Lord for you all, and for you, Mary, in particular, that He will bring you to the knowledge of the truth which I enjoy. And I, too, trust that my prayers will be heard.

M. And yet both our prayers cannot be heard.

F. God has often ways of answering our prayers in a sense better for us than that in which we offer them. When you pray that I may be brought back to my old religion, all I am sure that you can wish for me is, that I may be brought to a knowledge of the truth, and that is also my prayer for you and for myself.

M. Yes; but I feel certain that our religion is the truth.

F. But suppose for a moment that it is possible you may be mistaken, would not then the best answer God could give to your prayers be, that instead of leading me back to error, He should bring both you and me to a fuller and clearer knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. There is one thing, however, in what you say which, though it ought not to have surprised me, I confess did shock me. It was your saying that it was the Virgin that you were imploring for me! It is now so long that I have been accustomed to use only one, the only Mediator, in approaching to God, and have felt it sinful to have recourse to any other, that it was painful to me to have it forced upon my thoughts again, that it was not so with you, and that you allowed any one to come between you and your God and Saviour.

M. Oh, Frank, this is a subject on which it would distress me to hear you talk. I think I could bear better to hear of any other of the errors you may have learned among Protestants than if they had taught you to blaspheme and dishonour the Holy Virgin.

F. God forbid that I should blaspheme or dishonour her, dear Mary. I have never been taught to think of her otherwise than as a holy woman, highly favoured of God, and honoured by Him in a way which could fall to the lot but of one woman upon earth. All I object to is, that she should be put by you into the place of God.

M. But, Frank, you must know very well that I do not put her into the place of God. If it was an ignorant Protestant who said it I should not be surprised; but that